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Jephthah's Daughter.

A
DRAMATIC POEM.

BY

Mrs. ANN WILSON.

L O N D O N :

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T H E

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

UPON offering this piece to the world, I suppose it will be necessary to answer some objections that may be made to it.—And first, as to its species, that it is neither tragic nor comic. This error, if it be deemed such, the inimitable Shakespear has fallen into. With me it was accidental : my intentions were to have made it a tragedy ; but this my feelings would not suffer. The more I contemplated the virtues of Jephthah's daughter, the greater was my aversion to her death, and the greater were my difficulties in reconciling it to the Mosaic dispensation ; it no where, that I know of, allowing human sacrifices : and though there be some colour, from the sacred text, to believe that she was put to death, yet many learned and pious persons have sufficiently proved that she was not. And under that dispensation, where virtuous actions seldom failed of meeting with a suitable reward, it would have been highly derogatory to the goodness of the Almighty, had such a virtuous innocent young person died in such a horrid manner, as by the hand of an indulgent parent ; and such a

scene, I am sure, would have been too affecting for a Christian audience.

The next objection may be raised by those who are so tenacious of scripture, that they think any thing which bears the resemblance of a play, a profanation of it. Were we to introduce scenes that border upon indecency, they would surely be in the right: for such scenes being mingled amongst many of our best plays, have thrown an odium upon the stage, which might be rendered as useful as the pulpit, did it, instead of gratifying the lascivious passions of mankind, strive to illustrate the virtues of those whom human nature, though ever so much depraved, will always venerate.

But these reformatations are far beyond my abilities to bring about: when a general reformation of manners takes place, then may this be effected; but while there are people that will pay for having their vices flattered, there will always be found people ready to employ their time to such base purposes.

Wit is not my talent, nor have I any lucrative views in my writings; but my heart bleeds for the degenerate taste of the age, that can relish no books, nor company, which does not favour their beloved topics, of jest, raillery, and scandal.

This,

P R E F A C E.

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This, my assertion, will, I trust, be sufficient to satisfy those, who, through the warmth of their piety, may be scandalized at my gathering materials for the drama out of the holy scripture. But, if they are not, I can plead the example of authors both ancient and modern. The best play of the best French author is taken from scripture; and a reverend divine of our church says, "it is a poem in which the most superb and august spectacle, the most interesting events, and the most sublime flow of poetry, are all nobly and naturally united."

The blessed St. Paul, says Milton, did not think a verse of Euripides unworthy a place in his divine Epistle to the Corinthians; and that primitive pattern of Christianity, Gregory Nazianzen, did write a tragedy, which he entitled "Christ suffering." Does not the holy scriptures, says the incomparable Cowley, yield more poetical variety, than the fabulous thread-bare stories of the heathens? Indeed, every time I do peruse those sacred writings, images arise in such splendor, that I wish myself possessed of the divine Raphael's pencil, or rather Milton's genius, to illustrate them.

In point of the dramatic unities I have complied as nearly as I could; though, if I might be bold enough to own a sentiment contradictory to the modern hypothesis, I would say, that it is a greater

greater imposition upon nature, to crowd the transactions of days and months within the limits of twelve hours, than to impose twelve days, or twelve months, upon our auditors, as three or three or four hours. It is a wonder that persons so scrupulously nice about the unity of time, have not invented some method to make those transactions, of which the drama is only a commemoration, and perhaps transacted above a thousand years ago, pass for recent actions. But, as that exceeds their art, I humbly conceive that the other is unnecessary. Nor do I apprehend that the unity of place is more essential. If the persons represented be at Athens in the first act, says *Monf. de Voltaire*, how can they get to Persia by the second? This ingenious gentleman pays but a bad compliment to that transcendant privilege, which, by favour of infinite power and goodness, we enjoy, of transporting our thoughts, in a second of time, wherever we please; nay, a poet would, even in that time, raise an ideal world, and people it out of his own imagination. Then, can he conceive so poorly of other people's thoughts, as to suppose that they cannot attend him? These unities we cannot suppose the inimitable *Shakespear* ignorant of, yet we find that he disregards them; and the variety of his scenes may, I think, be numbered amongst his beauties.

But

But I fear that I have laid open my thoughts too much to censure; as it is from a concordance of the three great unities, that the generality of readers pronounce the drama more or less perfect.

I am doubtful about the reception that this may meet with; but hope that it may be some attenuation of its faults, to assure the public, that my chief motive for imposing it upon them, was to stir up a kind of emulation in the breasts of my dear countrywomen, to imitate a young person who seems to have possessed the virtues of piety and filial obedience in their greatest eminence; with a fortitude that might have done credit to the greatest hero of antiquity.

My giving her a lover is a piece of Anachronism, which I hope will be forgiven me, love having been ever looked upon as the refiner and harmonizer of human nature. Indeed I thought it an illustration of her virtues in giving up the world so willingly, when her hopes of happiness were all so fair.

The sentiments that she possesses may not, I hope, be liable to censure; being such as, I think, would not have discredited the breast of Eve in her state of innocence, and therefore may not be deemed unworthy the contemplation of the most delicate amongst that part of my readers, for whose edification I do repeat that I have ventured to present this to the world.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

JEPHTHAH, Judge of Israel.

EBINEEZER, an Elder.

ELON, an Elder.

ADONIKIM, a Captain.

IBZAN, a Captain.

ELEAZER, High-Priest.

PHINIAS, a Priest.

LEVITES, &c.

W O M E N.

JEMIMA, Daughter to Jephthah.

MAHALELAH,

KEZIAH,

ACHASAH,

SELLA,

NAAMA,

Virgins,

attendants on

Jemima.

Scene at the beginning upon the Banks of JABER;
and afterwards at JEPHTHAH's House in MIZ-
PETH of GILEAD.

Jephthah's Daughter.

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene upon the Banks of JABER.

Enter JEMIMA, attended by her Virgins, drest in white Robes, and Garlands of Flowers upon their Heads.

JEMIMA.

THE Sun has made his circuit round the world,
And he is now retir'd unto his rest :
The Moon, with milder beams, supplies his place,
And Hesperus emits a twinkling light.
Inanimate creatures are regular,
Their motions correspond with nature's lore,
And fair harmony does from thence proceed.
Beautiful might this sweet creation be
Did mortals so accord with rectitude.
You sparkling orbs ! that yonder shine so bright,
You never strive to dispossess each other
Of that space which the lord of all hath
Allotted you !
But men do fight, and each other rob of life,
For little trifling quantities of earth,
Which they must soon relinquish up again.

Kez. Yet thou, Jemima, art an exception
To that disobedience which in the human
Species does prevail ; for, to fulfil
The laws of righteousness, thou willing
Yields thy blooming charms to death,

B

And

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

And that when nature courts thee
 In its loveliest form ;
 Of Gilead's fair daughters 'art thou most fair,
 And all its glorious youth do sigh for thee.

Jem. Hush, Keziah, hush,—thou hast forgot
 That Jemima renounces now the world,
 With all its fading joys,—
 Unto majestic fair eternity !
 Thy Jemima is for ever wed,
 Eternity, with minutes, days, and hours,
 Will never circumscribe my joys.
 Ye sweet soft seats of all my pleasures here,
 I bid you now farewell !
 How oft upon thy flow'ry banks,
 O Jaber ! I my flocks have fed ;
 How wou'd the harmless mothers watch my looks,
 While their sweet lambs, fair bleating innocence,
 With artless looks did all around me play.
 Be you, my lov'd companions, their guardians
 In my stead ; from prowling wolves do them protect,
 And lead them out at early dawn to pastures fair.
 The ewes that are with young, O gently lead !
 And the new year'd lambs within your bosoms
 bear.

[*The virgins weep.*]

Mab. Fear not thou, O dearly beloved maid !
 That we can e'er be wanting in our care.
 But to live bereft of thee, our angel,
 That safely didst conduct us every where,
 Is worse than death, 'tis grief unutterable.

Act.

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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Ack. More than thy sheep, shall we, *Jemima*;
Unto perils be expos'd ;
Yea unto foes, that more pernicious are
Than wolves, for which thou fears thy sheep.
Such sanctity beam'd forth out of thy looks
As cou'd dash incontinency to pieces.

Jem. Then I will to you the secret unfold,
And my lov'd companions mark now my words.
Let no lascivious glance steal from your looks,
Keep pure your hearts,—keep them in their
Native whiteness, like the new-wash'd lambs
On Gilead's mountains fair ;
So shall you, with primevous innocence,
Man's ferocious, savage passion tame.
So shall each movement of his heart
Beat in soft sympathy with yours.

Sell. But do not men in artful cities bred,
Strive to gain poor unwilling female hearts,
When they do not mean to yield up their own ?

Jem. Mark their looks, eyes will tell
What words deny.
Strange perfidy of the superior sex,
That force the maid to actions insincere !
Nor when, with ardent tears, the lover sues,
Dare the soft tender pitying maid
Own the feelings of her conscious heart.
For men, like the *Lamia*, soft tears will shed,
When female innocence they wou'd devour,
And often boast that they have gain'd an artless
Virgin's heart——
If she has consented to surrender

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

Her honour to your base ignoble lust,
 You do well to boast, that succeeding maidens
 May profit by her loss.
 But if when, with looks of seeming innocence,
 You gently did solicit for her love,
 And she did own the soft movements of her heart,
 If through pride, and folly, then ye boast;
 You are strangers unto the congenial,
 Unto the divine harmony of souls;
 By no soft gentle mother were ye nurs'd;
 But amidst dark savage woods were bred,
 Where deep howling wolves, and fierce
 Tygers prey!
 This last advice, my dear companions, take;
 Follow virtue, in that shall you have peace.
 Tho' to fulfil my honour'd father's vow,
 This fleeting transient breath I offer up,
 Yet I am well assured this thinking part
 Of me shall never die,—
 It is an emanation of that power
 Which quick'neth all;
 And when this brittle, mortal form dissolves,
 It shall assume a form more pure,
 More permanent, more like its author far.
 Then weep no more, my dear friends, weep no
 more;
 For we in Eden's everlasting bowers,
 Eternal bowers of bliss! shall meet again:
 My Ibzan there shall equal ev'ry love.
 But, my dear companions, let us now haste,
 Lest it be said, that with reluctance
 Jephthah's daughter offer'd up herself to death.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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SCENE II.

An Oak at JEPHTHAH's Gate in MISPAH.

Enter JEPHTHAH.

THOU comes! fair Aurora, daughter of the
dawn!
Thou comes to gladden ev'ry eye but mine.

Enter ELON.

Elon. Hail! Israel's great deliverer, all hail!

Jep. My good friend! I have deliver'd Israel;
But, in that deliverance, have lost myself,
I have, alas! no daughter now——
The fair hopes of my family are lost.

Elon. My lord, the lovely virgin is not dead.

Jep. But she most surely is consign'd to death.
When yon fair radiant sun shall next arise
His beams shall view her in her winding sheet,
Fell death the blooming virgin shall espouse,
Cold and dreary is her nuptial bed..

Elon. But, Jephthah, as a prince, has pow'r
with God.

Jep. Alas! alas! my friend, I have no pow'r;
I dare not violate that fatal vow,
Made to the great tremendous lord of

All

6 JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

All—But who comes yonder with
Loks so wild, and garments rent ?

(Enter Ibzan)

Art thou Ibzan ? or art thou the ghost
Of that late valiant man ?

Ibz. Thou art in thy last conjecture right,
I am, O Jephthah ! but the shadow
Of what I was, when at thy side this
Arm did mow down thousands of proud
Ammon's sons.—

But is that beam of light return'd ?
Thy fair angelic daughter ;

Jep. She is not yet return'd, with trembling
Feet, I came as morning daw'n'd
To meet her here.

Ibz. Ibzan will conduct her to thy presence.

Jep. No, my friend, forbear, lest busy
Fame her spotless innocence shou'd taint,
And say, that in the two moons of pennance
Which she imposed upon herself,
She had a paramour, with whom she
Did indulge her carnal appetite.

Ibz. Then shall the blameless virgin die ?

Jep. She must, or Jephthah break his
Faith with God.

Ibz. Can Jephthah, that was ever successful
At stratagems, contrive no means to save
The virgin's life ?

Jep. That gladly with my own I wou'd redeem,
Might

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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Might I thereby save the forfeit of my vow.
But stratagems with that omniscient
Power, who views the naked thoughts,
Are vain.

Ibz. Then Ibzan he has vow'd she shall not die,
And one of us must forfeit now his faith!
Fame shall rumour that the sweet maid is dead;
And unto all, but to my conscious love,
She shall be incognisable——But see!
She comes——she comes——
Like musick are the lovely virgin's steps!
All the celestial powers do shed on her
Their sacred influence.

Enter JEMIMA,

Attended by the virgins, drest in white robes,
and crowned with garlands; MAHALELAH
sings the following ode, which the virgins play
upon their lyres, dancing all the while in so-
lemn manner.

Ma. Behold! a spotless sacrifice we bring,
To the omniscient king:
Her penance she hath done
Obedient doth she come
Unto a parent's will.

She comes a blameless sacrifice!
The virgin's praise proclaim unto the skies,
In spotless innocence she dies.
Nor she, when youthful lovers sue,
Her solemn purposes e'er rue,
But calmly does them all refuse.

Happy

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

Happy, happy, happy she !
 That yields up all,
 That yields up all
 For fair eternity.

Chorus, Happy, happy, &c.

With grace divine, the fair
 She comes ! from your soft lyre
 Let heav'nly notes transpire,
 That sweetly tremble in the air
 Ye sister virgins quire.
 Your brows with garlands bound
 To the lyre's sweet, shrill, trembling sound,
 Come dance ye softly all around :
 Celestial cherubims attend in air,
 The virgin's spotless soul to bear
 To Eden's blissful seats above,
 Eternal seats of peace and love !
 All softly dancing, with me say ;
 This is Jephthah's daughter fair
 Jemima's wedding day.
 Espous'd to heav'n, lo ! the meek virgin stands !
 Bound with celestial Hymen's blessed bands.

Sublime event !

On heav'n intent,

The virgin she

Is extacy.

All, all is ravishment.

Chorus, Sublime event ! &c.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

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The musick ceases, Jemima comes forward, she kneels to her father, uttering the following words.

Jem. My pilgrimage, most honour'd Sir,
In the dreary desert, I have perform'd,
For pardon of my youthful crimes.
Lo ! I have wrestled with my God,
And he hath gracious seal'd my peace ;
My soul is all over calm, serene,
My life I offer up obedient,
O father ! to thy will.

(Jephthah raises her up.)

Jeph. Ah, me ! what has my rashness wrought !
Why, ye Gileadites, why did you disturb
Me in my calm retreat ?
Worse than my father's cruel sons were you,
For in my banishment fair peace did still
Attend on me :
She, in the dreary, silent hour of night,
Wou'd ever strive to make my pillow soft,
But nowon thorns I lay my weary head ;
Nor does the downy hand of sleep ere soothe
These eyes, as he was wont, with soft repose.
A daughter of beauty I then possess'd,
And she was mild as morning's fairest beams.
Amoreath from Amnon's proud tyranny
Did I release, and from fell slavery
Redeem'd many of Israel's wretched sons,
That eighteen years had groan'd beneath
The yoke ;

C

Thus

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

Thus did my country become fortunate,
 And I alone was render'd wretched.
 'Twas my rashness that wrought my ruin.

Jem. Forbear, my father thy complaint forbear,
 O great Jehovah! thou kind conductor
 Of my youth!
 To my father and my native country
 O! grant a long felicity——
 I die, yet think not that I shall
 No where exist, or that the winds
 Will dissipate my soul,
 I have labour'd all my life t'attain virtue,
 And have now a strong hope that I am
 Going for to attain its reward.
 Those that endeavour'd to beautify
 Their souls with purity, rather than
 Their bodies with foreign
 Ornaments, are always in waiting
 For the hour of their removal.
 And tho' my spirit, too subtle
 For mortal ken, do elude your sight,
 Yet be you assur'd, my dear beloved friends,
 That your Jemima is not dead,
 No, this immortal mind! can never die.

Ibz. But O thou blessed, thou celestial maid!
 'Twill be worse than death to live without thee;
 For while thou speaks fair Eden's garden
 Sheds its odoriferous sweets around.

Jem.

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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Jem. O my Ibzan ! O my love ! be satisfy'd ;
 Consent to yield me up : can I guiltless live,
 And render my righteous father to heav'n unjust ?
 Of all things precious in my joys,
 Thy love most precious was ;
 And thy dearest image, like an idol,
 Stood long betwixt me and my God ;
 I was distracted in my choice, when
 I thought upon the refined delicacies
 Of thy love.
 But such and so refined are all the spirits
 Of the just.
 Such has imagination painted angels
 In my breast ;
 And such is that fair glorious society
 With whom, as acquaintance familiar,
 I hope ere long for to associate.
 Our pleasures will be then
 Like their duration infinite.
 And as this ever blessed society shall
 Welcome me unto their fair abodes,
 So do I hope ere long to welcome thee :
 And then, my Ibzan, shall we live such lives
 As angels live, so pure and so divine.

(trumpet sounds ; enter Adonikam.)

Ado. Arm, Jephthah, arm, my lord,
 Ere the Ephraimites do burn the city.

Jep. What is their quarrel, say, my good Ado-
 nikam ?

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

Ado. They threaten to burn thy house,
Because thou didst not call them
To partake of Ammon's spoils.

Jep. When we call'd them to our help, they
wou'd not come.
Then at the peril of our lives we fought the Am-
monites:

And do they now expect to share that spoil,
Which we had defiance unto death to win?
But they cou'd not sure have demanded fight
At a more convenient time, than when
Jephthah wish'd for some fair pretence to die.
To thee, Ebineezer, our trusty well approved
friend,
The care of our chaste daughter we commit.

Ebin. And fear not thou, my most honour'd
friend,
But I will guard the virtuous maiden
With an angel's vigilance.

(Jephthah takes leave of his daughter.)

Jep. (to Ibzan & Adonikam) Come you, my
gallant chiefs,
Let us once more the combat try,
We'll valiant live, or bravely die.

(Exeunt omnes.)

The End of the First Act.

ACT

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

11

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter EBINEEZER with IBZAN.

Eb. What means this quick return from fight
my lord,
Has Ephraim yielded up obedience unto
Jephthah, our puissant chief?
Have they laid down their arms again,
Speak, Ibzan, quick, and tell me all?
I know thou could'st not fly,
For thou was ever wont to court
Honour where danger raged most.

Ibz. But the warlike trumpet has no power
For to invigorate Ibzan's soul;
In battles he no longer seeks renown,
Since the palm that crown'd his brow is lost.

Eb. Thy speech is, methinks, somewhat ambiguous.
Tell me strait, how goes the battle?

Ibz. Most reverend sir, I did not stay to see,
I broke my spear, and threw my shield away,
Who won or lost gave no concern to me,
I have no life—no love—my fair one she
Alas! is doomed to die——
But ere that she receives the sacrificer's knife,
Ibzan will pour out his life before her.
For life bereft of her is empty, vain:

And

And Ibzan will accompany his love.
Therefore I pray thee, my good Ebineezer,
Shew me to her.

Eb. In any thing but this, thou, Ibzan, surely
Might command me ;
But, by the laws of sacred honor, I am bound
To keep the maid secure from every eye.

Ibz. Ah ! cruel man, wilt thou deny this grace
Unto a soul oppress'd like mine.
I only wish to see the maid and die.

Eb. Had death now, Ibzan, been thy wish,
Thou wou'd'st not have fled it in the field of war.
But on some foul purpose thou art come,
And I will guard the fair from thy polluting hand.

Ibz. What means this insolence ? base man !
Did not thy age protect thee, this right hand
Shou'd do its owner justice, for the bold
Affront that thou does offer——
Cou'd Ibzan ever seek for to pollute
Such immaculate innocence, the earth wou'd
Open sure, and with its gaping jaws devour him.
The Lord Jehovah, the omniscient God !
He is witness that my heart never yet
Gave birth unto a thought that did reflect
Dishonour on my love,—
Nor cou'd divinity like her's beget a wish impure.
No, my *Jemima* ! fair as thy angelic form
Has been my love !
And it shall never be a prostitute——
For thy dear sake, it never shall descend
To delight itself in any other fair ;

For

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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For Gilead's fairest daughters are as much
Unlike to thee ! as thy great father is
To that haggard piece of mortality
Which bars my way unto thee :
But Ibzan will find means to see his love ;
She needs not thy pretended guardianship—
In her own virtue she is most secure.
And I charge thee, dotard ! as thou values
Life, not to provoke my rage.

Eb. What means these brutal threats
Unto Israel's sacred elder ?
Know, audacious youth, that if in safety
Our chief return, thou with thy life
Shall answer this.

Ibz. All perils I defy for her I love,
While yet she lives, scarce one short hour, perhap,
Do not deny these eyes to feast upon
Her looks, they are no cure for lust :
Unbar the door, and let me enter.

Eb. Go thy way, thou foolish young man,
For thou shalt not see her.

Ibz. Thou lies, old man, 'tis not thy
Shrivell'd arm that shall bar Ibzan
From the treasure of his soul.

(*Exit.*

SCENE II. *a Chamber in JEPHTHAH's house.*

Enter EBINEEZER and JEMIMA.

Eb. Consent but now, O fair ! to be my love,
And I will transport thee far from thy fate,
Far from thy cruel father, we will fly,

Who

16 JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

Who dooms thee merciless to death.
 Yes, we will live and love, my charming fair.
 In some pleasant valley will we hide
 Ourselves, where bubbling streams
 Do sweetly murmur, and soft-footed
 Winds nimbly dance around.
 Plaintive nightingales shall sing us both to rest.

Jem. Get thee hence, fly foolish man, fly from
 my sight.

Jemima has been courted for to live
 By a form as fair as thine is soul;
 Go put ashes upon thy hoary head;
 Spend thy few remaining years in penitence,
 Ere thou art call'd before that Judge
 Who cannot bear impurity.

Eb. If love be a crime, so fair is the offence,
 That man of necessity must sin.
 But know, vain maid, that thou art in my power,
 And may thank me for asking favours
 That without thy leave I might have taken.

Jem. No, base man, Jemima is the care of
 heaven.
 That pure God, to whom she is devoted,
 Will not receive a blemish'd offering,
 He, with his own strength, will invigorate
 These nerves, while he relaxes thine:
 Thou foolish, false, perfidious man!

Eb. Thou may rail, 'tis all a woman can,
 But I shall force thee to consent.

*(While he struggles with her, a noise is heard at
 the door; he starts, and seems affrighted:
 Ibzan enters with soldiers.)*

Jem.

Jem. O Ibzan ! thou art come in lucky hour
For to preserve me from this savage man.

Ibz. Thou basilisk !—*(to Ebineezer)*
Was it for purposes like these, that as in
A prison thou did'st immure this angelic fair !
Sieze him, guards !—*(the guards lay hold of him)*

Eb. Fellows desist, know ye not that
I am judge in Jephthah's stead ?

Ibz. And of that high office well hast thou
Avail'd thyself.

(signs to the guards to take him ; they carry him off the stage.)

Jem. What thanks are due to thee, thou gallant
Youth ! for that thou didst preserve my
Honour immaculate.—

How, with infamy, wou'd my name to
Distant time been handed down,
Had I, upon the verge of death, been poluted
By that old savage fool ;
Not even death cou'd then have wiped
Away the stain :

It is my glory and my crown to die
In native innocence.

Ibz. And thou art innocence so pure, that
Were the lineaments of its soft features lost,
They might take its portrait again from thee.
How dared, with foul poluting hand, that
Savage bear to touch these snowy arms,
That Ibzan scarcely dared to kiss, lest
His breath shou'd them dissolve.

D

Jem.

Fem. Yes, my Ibzan, for while I live I must
Still call thee mine,
Thy love was delicate, refinement all ;
'Tis emulous sure of those chaste loves,
With whom, I trust, ere long, we shall unite.
But I pray thee tell me what guardian power
Sent thee to my relief at this important hour?

Ibz. It was, my fair, thy guardian angel sure,
For unusual terror seized my soul,
Just as the bloody combat did begin,
I therefore broke my sword, and threw away
My shield, and came by heaven's appointment
To thy relief.

Fem. I pray thee, Ibzan, how did the battle go?
I fear my honour'd father's danger,
The Ephraimites were in a number so superior.

Ibz. Thou needst not fear, most pious maid,
For Jephthah's valour does him protect :
He looks like Hermon's mount when
Flashing lightning kindles on its brow.
As mists disperse when the glorious sun appears,
So at the splendor of his majestic looks,
The dastard Ephraimites will assuredly fly.
For had thy but one brave man amongst
Their tribe, when thy great father call'd
Them to assist against the Ammonites,
They cou'd not have refused to come.

Fem. His bravery, I know, is well approved,
But his vow, alas ! sits heavy on his soul,
The terrors that I feel are upon his and thine
Account, O my Ibzan !

For

For gracious Heaven has freed me from my own.

Ibz. And does thou pity then thy Ibzan?

Thou art good indeed.

But think not that he will long survive thee—

Nay one fate, one fame, shall us both attend,

It is Ibzan's glory to think that, when

Thy wonderous piety, thy filial love

Is to remotest time recorded,

His name shall stand with thine, thou

Pattern of angelic purity!

I will most gladly yield up life with thee,

So shall my freed spirit on thine attend

To Eden's blissful seats, eternal seats

Of downy peace, and fair angelic love!

Jem. This wou'd be bliss indeed, my Ibzan,

For to be attended on my way by thee.

But death will not at thy bidding, come,

And mortal drugs our law-giver does

Forbid.

Ibz. Ibzan will need no mortal drugs, sweet
maid.

Thy death will sure be forcible enough

To stop the purple tide of life.

(*Enter Elon.*

Elon. My lord Ibzan, I pray thee what is
Ebenezer's crime? Mizeph is all in uproar
About him;

Women and children run about the city,

The sun, they say, might as soon cease to

Shine, as Ebenezer deviate from the paths

Of virtue.

Such is the general opinion of this old
 Approved patriot's virtue.
 The guardian of widows and orphans,
 He in years that are past was call'd.
 And when, with a speedy pace, like to some
 Smooth, gentle purling brook, undisturb'd
 By winds and impetuous rains,
 The purple tide of life runs calm along,
 Can he become the passion's hurricane?

Ibz. No time of life from temptation is secure.
 Had I not seen his brutal passion,
 Like thee, good Elon, I should have disbeliev'd;
 But such was this vile man's audacious words,
 That he said, I came on some base pretence,
 And he wou'd keep the maid from my polluting
 hand.

Then was I forced with guards to break the door,
 And found him offering violence to my love.
 But she herself the truth will ascertain.

Fem. When I his odious passion wou'd not hear,
 The faithless man then offer'd force,
 And said 'twas courtesy to ask for favours,
 That without my leave he might have taken.

Elon. Heaven may deceive us sure, since Ebi-
 neezer cou'd.

Fem. No, Elon, put not man, that is fallible,
 In the same scale with omnipotent infallibility.

(Enter the virgins with flowers.)

Ibz. O why did you desert *(to the virgins)*
 Your fair companion in the needful hour?

Naa.

Naa. Suspecting of no ill, she sent us out
To cull fresh flowers, our garlands to renew,
When, lo, Ebineezer, at our return, came forth
And said, that *Jemima*, some extraordinary
Devotion to perform, beg'd to be alone.

Elon. Is it possible that this old man cou'd be
so frail!

Ibz. But with virtue so strongly is *Jemima* for-
tify'd,
That all his efforts were but vain.

Jem. Indeed I almost trembled at my danger,
But my deliverer came in lucky hour.

Ibz. I pray thee, *Elon*, my good lord, keep
him in hold
Till we great *Jephthah's* pleasure know.

Elon. I go, my lord, to execute thy will.

(Exit *Elon*.)

Jem. I pray ye now, my dear companions,
Take your instruments, and let us drive
Away all thoughts of this perfidious man,
My *Ibzan* he will deign to tune his lyre.

Ibz. How shall I tune my harp to melody?
My soul seems now upon the verge of death!

Jem. My soul is too upon the wing,
But that attunes it more to harmony;
I, like the swan, wou'd sing at death's approach,
And let our souls, my *Ibzan*, still be unisons.

Ibz.

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

Ibz. At thy bidding I then, my love, will try
What melody a heavy heart can make.

*Jemima sings the following ODE, which Ibzan and
the virgins play upon their instruments.*

I Leave mortality below,
Mortality all frail and vain !
How mean all earthly pleasures shew,
Eternity to gain.
An inexhaustible delight
Now swallows up my senses quite !
Heaven me angelic wings does lend,
On airy pinions I
To its celestial, glorious realms ascend,
To Empyræum's blest abodes I fly !
In lasting bliss eternity to spend.

The verdure of eternal spring,
The blessed everlastingly enjoy ;
With sweet seraphick voice they sing,
Their variated numbers never cloy.
Their great ! eternal theme, Omnipotence !
For at his right hand pleasures flow immense.

My mortal pilgrimage is done ;
Adieu ye, all my soft delights !
Adieu to all beneath the sun ;
Joys more fair me invites.
My dearest friends I bid adieu !
But I, ere long, shall meet with you,
Yea, we shall meet 'midst roseate bowers ;
Unutterable bliss !
Amidst Eden's fair unwithering flowers
Shall we enjoy eternal happiness.

I come !

I come ! I come, ye blest celestial powers !
Unebbing raptures me inspire !
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting doors,
My ravish'd soul is all on fire !
To bliss uncircumscrib'd by days and hours
Does my enraptur'd soul her pinions strain,
All joy beneath the sun does she disdain.

O thou ! unutterable source of grace !
When shall I view the brightness of thy face ?
If hiding of thy power does shine so clear,
How shall the revealing of it appear ?
Pelucid splendor decks thy bright abode,
O ! thou supreme ! unutterable God !
The sun's bright radiant beams are lost in night,
When thy vast splendor is reveal'd to sight ;
Fair radiance ineffable ! divine !
Does all around the Lord Jehovah shine.

End of the Second Act.

ACT

A C T III.

*Scene the First; trumpet sounds; enter JEPHTHAH
with ADONIKIM.*

Jep. **O** Great Jehovah! universal Lord!
What havock does ambition make
Amidst thy works!
Of Ephraim is full forty thousand lost.
O Ephraim! O my brethren! how does my
Bowels yearn for you!

Ado. Alas! my lord, they themselves
Did their fall necessitate.
Did I not, by thine appointment, go
Mediator unto this perverse race?
How did I remonstrate with them upon
The unlawfulness of the assault!
I told them that Jephthah their brother
Beg'd amongst Israel's sons there might be peace.
To which they answered with unbecoming
Words of rank scurrility;
Calling us, and our puissant leader,
Fugitives, a bastard banditti crew:
Averting still that they would burn our
Houses, lay waste fair Gilead's fertile plains,
And drive us back to our fugitive residence again.

Jep. How often did I entreat their help
Against the Ammonites;
And as often did they refuse to come;

Then

Then sent I messengers to parley with
Proud Ammon's King ;
Acquainting him that it was now more
Than three hundred years ago,
That, by Jehovah's divine permission,
Our great Law-giver took Amoreah
From Sihon, King of the fierce Amorites,
Because he did refuse a passage to him,
With his wandering people, thro' their land ;
Of the Amorites they ask'd no other boon
Than to drink the common water, and to
Breathe the common air :
Yet this their want of humanity refused,
And, at Jahaz, they Israel beset in fight,
Where, by divine favour of his God,
Did our great incomparable leader
Put this inhospitable people all to flight.
Thus did our gracious God give Amoreah
Into our hands ; and why does Ammon
Seek to wrest it from us now ?
Let them possess, in peace, what Chemock
Their god doth give them to possess,
And we will possess what the living
God doth give to us.—
This message did I send, but the King
Of Ammon wou'd not listen to my words.
Then, as a giant, with wine refresh'd,
Did I arise, the Lord of Hosts did his
Own strength over all my limbs diffuse ;
My soul unusual courage felt,—
And to unequal combat my few troops I lead.—
Thou knows, my good Adonikim,
For thou was ever present at my side,
How in blood and sweat we fought ;
From Aroer even unto Minuith did we

E

Them

26 JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

Them pursue, glory and riches Victory
Then in both hands brought ;
Twenty cities, with vineyards, did we sack,
And ample spoils we gain'd :
But we from conquest now return,
And lo ! no laurels deck our brows.
It seems as if the hand had rais'd itself
To maim the body to which it does belong,
It feels the anguish which itself did cause.
'Mongst yonder men that lay along the ground
Israel a part of its own strength hath lost ;
And by that loss unto our common foes
Are made an easier prey.

Ado. Jephthah's valour shall that loss repay.

Enter ELON.

Elon. Hail, most puissant chief ! Elon welcomes
Thy return.

Jep. Most reverend Elon, I thank thee ;
The victory indeed is ours,
But yet I mourn for the success.
Ephraim, our brother, is brought low indeed ;
Full forty thousand have they lost.

Elon. And for that loss they only have
Themselves to blame.
How unwilling thou didst them chastize
We can this memorable day attest :
Did they not set thy very house on fire ?
By no other means could'st thou them restrain.

Ado. These men, for whom thou mourns,
O mighty chief !

In

In loss no more concern the common-wealth,
Than does the loss of drones unto the hive,
That set brooding upon their waxen cells
For to be fed by the laborious bee ;
So did the Ephraimites ignobly rest ;
While 'midst perils of death and blood
We fought ;
And wou'd they snatch that prey out of our
teeth,
Which we had defiance unto death to win ?

Jep. Yes, my good Adonikim, these spoils
Were indeed by Jephthah dearly won ;
They cost him more than victory can give.
Ah ! me ! my evil genius sure did prompt
Me to that fatal vow.

Elon. Hast thou consulted with the priests, my
lord,
Will they not suffer thee for to redeem the maid ?

Jep. The priests are men, and sometimes frail
ones too,
They cannot reverse right and wrong ;
I made a solemn vow unto the Lord,
And cannot from that vow depart.
So grievous did the burthen which my poor
Brethren felt afflict my soul,
That I thought there was no other grievance
But itself ;
Then did I vow, incontinently, unto the Lord,
That if he wou'd vouchsafe to give up Ammon
Into my hands, that I wou'd offer up whatever

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

First came out of my gates at my return.
 When lo ! my daughter, in robes of gladness,
 Issu'd forth, with songs, to welcome me ;
 Her voice was like the angels that descend
 On embassies of love.

Elon. 'Twas most unfortunate, my honour'd sir,
 But if she dies, her fame shall yet survive,
 Yea, her obedience to her father and her God,
 Shall extend her name to earth's remotest end ;
 From the odium of disobedience shall
 The virtuous maiden redeem her sex !
 Eve did eat of the forbidden fruit,
 But Jephthah's daughter, to fulfill all righteousness,
 Most willingly did yield herself to death.

Jep. Well hast thou said, my ever faithful
 friend !
 Unto remotest times shall she be famed
 For her piety, and parental love.
 Then I will muster up my small remains
 Of fortitude to see my sweetest girl again.
 Nature ! why didst thou weave our affections
 In such a mystic web ?
 Why didst thou make our sorrows than our joys
 More forcible ? nay give us joys to make
 Our griefs more sharp ?
 For thou unto Jephthah gave a daughter,
 Whom hadst thou withheld, he had known no
 grief ;
 But his grief is now unutterable !
 Yet from his purpose shall he never shrink.
 O righteous Abraham ! I will follow thy example ;
 And O ! that Jehovah, ever merciful !

Wou'd

Wou'd grant to my obedience like reward ;
That he wou'd save my darling from the stroke.
But what pretence have I for such a hope ?
Not like that blessed patriarch have I deserv'd
Of my gracious God——
Nor have I been favour'd like that holy man.
What woes my wretched race of life has known !
So soon as my dear father's corpse was laid upon
The bier, did my cruel brothers drive me
From my native home ; and of my lawful
Inheritance did me deprive.
Then in the land of Job long time I did sojourn
A stranger, and in poverty.
Yet in this distressed state
Did a fair female deign to yield me love,
And she my sorrows and my cares consol'd :
But short-liv'd was my happiness ;
For ere the sun three times had journey'd
Round the world, heaven depriv'd me of
Her love, her tenderness, and sweet-consoling
care,
Leaving this little maid to sooth my woe ;
And in her sweet face I soon discover'd the win-
ning
Graces of her mother ; but ere that with
Full fragrance they did their opening
Sweets disclose, she became the guiltless cause
Of all my grief.
O ! had she not been so good, my cause for grief
Had then been less ; but she is an assemblage
Of every quality that merits praise and love :
She was made from every creature's best.

(Jephthah weeps.)

Ado.

Ado. O mighty Chief! thy tears forbear,
 Thy noble achievements now call to mind,
 And with their great success console thyself.
 When Israel, revolting from the true,
 And only God, did worship Baalim, and
 Ashtaroth, whom the idolatrous stile Queen
 of Heaven,
 Then the Lord Jehovah his power withdrew.
 Full eighteen years were we by the Ammonites,
 And by the cruel Philistines oppress'd,
 Until deliverance by thee was sent:
 Nor cou'd another chief in all the land
 Be found of valor equal to the mighty task.
 Thy father's sons were but dead men compar'd to
 thee ;
 Of Gilead's loins was thou the strength and
 might !
 Therefore, since by the Lord Jehovah
 Thou has been thus distinguish'd,
 Deem not thyself, O Prince ! unfortunate.
 Had thou not rather that thy daughter die
 In virtuous innocence,
 Than, by a life of infamy, she did
 Discredit the achievements of a noble sire ?

Enter Ibzan.

Ibz. Hail, noble Chief! Ibzan welcomes
 Thy victorious return.

Jep. My good Ibzan, I thank thee ;
 Hast thou, since thy return, visited
 Our dear beloved daughter ?

Ibz.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER. 31

Ibz. O Jephthah ! I have tidings that will stun
thine ear.

Jep. What is it ? I pray thee, my good Ibzan,
say ?

Jephthah's ear is so much used to direful tales,
That surprize has lost its usual force.
Does it concern my daughter ?
Does she cease to live ? has sickness effected
What a parent trembles for to name ?
She cou'd not deviate from the paths of virtue ;
She cou'd not stain her native purity.

Ibz. No, her purity remains unstain'd,
It, like a mountain, stands immovable :
But she has been beset with perils——
Yet Heaven did graciously preserve her.

ep. How, I pray thee, Ibzan, say ?
For now my soul begins to take alarm.

Ibz. O Jephthah ! it will harrow up thy soul
To find that sage Ebineezer did betray thee.

Jep. As soon I thought the sun might change
his course,
And gallop back from his meridian height
Unto his chambers in the east again ;
As soon I thought might the fix'd seasons change,
And winter, with his leaden teeth devour
Our fairest hopes of future harvest,
As Ebineezer forsake the paths of truth.

Ibz. The tale is horrid, yet, O Jephthah !
I will tell thee all :
When as the bloody combat did begin,

I, as

I, as by some divine impulse led.
 Despairing, threw my sword and shield away,
 And came, with hasty steps, to see my fair.
 When lo! Ebineezer stopt my passage at the gate,
 And said that on some base pretence I came,
 But he wou'd guard the fair from my polluting
 hand.

I did attest my innocence, but 'twas fruitless all;
 Then with a guard I forced my way;
 We broke the door, and, with astonishment,
 Found him struggling with the fair;
 She was pale and breathless,
 But soon the roses in her cheeks revived,
 And she said that Heaven, in lucky hour,
 Had sent me to her relief.

Jep. Thou hast harrow'd up my soul indeed!
 But Heaven was gracious, that sent thee
 For to preserve her innocence.—

Thus, in one unguarded hour, has Ebineezer
 Lost those laurels, which in the course
 Of a long life, he with diligence did gain.
 Not until death shou'd we ascertain
 The merit of a virtuous life.

Who cou'd have thought that in Ebineezer's
 Shrivell'd veins such hot blood had run!
 In youth our passions are impetuous,
 And with cool reason will not be restrain'd;
 But age is the calm serene of life,
 'Tis the autumn of our year;
 When summer's vehement heat subsides,
 Reason, the sun of rationable souls,
 Diffuses its mild beams upon the mind,
 And all is calm and sweet serenity.
 Like as when autumnal suns do in the welkin set,
 Leav-

Leaving their parti-colour'd rays, fair
Radiance on the world to shed ;
Such is the mild serenity of virtuous age,
As nearer it approaches to the heavenly
Light, the brighter it appears ;
And miserable must that person be,
Who, in this season, hath not learn'd to curb
Each sensual appetite.

Enter Femima.

Fem. Once more welcome from the war,
O thou puissant man !
May Gilead ever find a leader like to thee !

Jep. And may that leader's fate be as fortunate
As mine is wretched !
But, O my child ! I tremble at thy danger—
Cou'd Ebineezer descend to actions base as these ?

Fem. Bless Heaven ! O my father ! that sent
A friend at need. Ebineezer did betray
That trust which thou repos'd in him,
But Heaven was kind, and wou'd not suffer
Him for to pollute my innocence.

Jep. Where is the vile perfidious man ?

Elon. I have him in my custody, till we thy
pleasure knew.

Jep. He should have died to palliate his crime,
I pray thee, my good Elon, bring him here,
And let him answer for his offence.

F

Elon.

Elon. I go, my lord, to fetch him. (*Exit Elon.*)

Jep. How will this ridiculous man appear?
What excuse for his foul crimes can he now
make?

Enter ELON with EBINEEZER.

Eb. Cover me, O Earth! and let not Jephthah's
Just eye meet mine.

Jep. Is it possible that there is so little faith
Left upon earth!
Ah, justice! ah, friendship! whither are ye fled?

Eb. Rail upon me, O Jephthah! and with thy
Curses blast this hoary head!
Ebinezzer wou'd not see the light again:
No, his foul guilty looks will blacken
All the fair expanse of Heaven;
The glorious sun will not on me look,
But, indignant, turn away his blessed beams,
And fiery meteors will appear, to make
My guilt more terrible!
I am a wretch, like Cain accurst of God:
Accurst of God, and thee.
I was the people's angel late,
But a devil am transmew'd.

Jep. This accusation of thyself bespeaks
That some small spark of grace does yet remain.
Springs thy repentance, Ebinezzer, from shame,
Or from remorse of soul?
Is it because that thy base heart is now
Discover'd to the world? or for grief that

Thou

Thou didst entertain dishonest thoughts ?
And betray'd that trust, which, as in
My guardian-angel, I reposed in thee.

Eb. Of both I stand condemned,—
Thou judge of Israel, my just doom
Decree, for I am weary of the light.
Guilt, like a phantom, haunts my every thought,
He that slew his brother was not more vile than
me.

Hide me, O Earth ! hide me from my crimes !

Jep. Be patient, Ebineezer, there is mercy ;
If repentance be sincere, our law-giver says,
That we shall find grace.

Eb. My purity of life can Gilead's daughters
well attest ;
I had no passion but to preserve their innocence ;
And often did I wonder how men, for
Such transient joys, cou'd be so frail !
How they cou'd permit themselves to sin
Against the laws of purity, of which
Nature gives us consciousness ;
And transgress the laws of God,
Which declare that no impurity shall
Him approach.
But lo ! on a sudden, virtue left my breast,
And furious brutal passion did succeed ;
I then determin'd on the impious act ;
The vision of thy friendship, within my fancy,
Strait arose, and warmly chid me
For my base ingratitude.
The virgin wept, and by ev'ry sacred tie
Conjured me to forbear ;

Her piteous tears wou'd have melted stone,
 But had no power upon my flinty heart;
 And as I prest in her my guilty arms,
 So vehement, in agonizing pain,
 Her heart did beat, that I wonder'd
 At my savage soul, which nothing cou'd incline to
 pity,

So violent was my desire, that every obstacle
 Inflamed it more, death and thy displeasure
 I set at nought, so furious was my barbarous pas-
 sion grown :

The temper fure did add some energy,
 For never was impulse so strong in mortal breast.
 But now the remembrance of the intended act
 Is, like wormwood, bitter to my soul.
 My wishes did consent—and of the infernal crime
 I stand accused.

Condemn me then, thou Judge of Israel !
 For I myself am witness to my guilt.

Jep. Then, Ebineezer, I will admit thy peni-
 tence

For thy present surety, in hopes that thou wilt
 No more offend.

And may thy story be a lesson to frail man,
 Who too often thinks himself secure, and stands
 Not on his guard for to resist temptation ;
 For there are certain affections seated in the
 Human breast, which it will assimilate,
 And watches for the time in which we think our-
 selves secure.

Jep. Of what thy wisdom does suggest, I stand
 a fatal monument :

I of my virtue grew too confident, and thought
 That,

That, like wine, it by age grew strong ;
But, while the soul holds affinity with flesh,
It shou'd be watchful o'er itself.
When from that dark sheath it is disengag'd,
No intermediate object can obstruct the heavenly
Radius that envelopes it with splendor
Everlasting and immense.
But, O ! my soul hath forfeited that light !
It is all over darken'd with impurity.

Jep. Be of comfort ; Heaven is indulgent
To returning virtue ;
My daughter she will supplicate for thee.

Eb. No, her pure eyes cannot descend to look
Upon a wretch so vile as me.

Jem. Think not, Ebineezer, that rancour now
Can reign within my breast :
My soul already seems an unison of those fair a-
bodes,
Where, like Aaron's rod, love all other passions
does devour.
Thou has my pity for thy gross offence,
And may all-gracious Heaven thy pardon seal.

Eb. Heavenly grace flows already from thy
tongue,
Like to those angelic forms descending down
With messages of peace and love to fallen man.
Grace from thy lips, like honey, does distill,
And my forlorn hopes with sweet comfort fill.

(Exeunt omnes.)

End of the Third Act.

ACT

A C T IV.

Scene the First; a large room in JEPHTHAH'S house, in which an altar is erected, with festoon curtains of blue and purple; enter JEPHTHAH with his daughter and IBZAN.

Jem. **N**OW, my dearest father, and my Ibzan,
All things are ready for the solemnity;
The Priests and Levites, with their instruments
Of musick, are arrived:

And I pray you be of good courage;
Let not, O my father, and my Ibzan! no look
Of grief discourage me throughout this awful
solemnity.

My death shall be honour'd by the living,
And my soul shall enjoy a nearer communication
With that ever blessed power, whose glory
We can never be filled with beholding!
He does himself far transcend all that is
Wonderous in his works!

His glories every idea of glory does transcend,
And his incorruptible spirit is in all things.
It hath pleased him to perfect me in my youth;
I have filled my space, and, I pray you,
Strive not, with looks of grief, to soil my crown.
Let it not be said, that Jephthah's daughter
Met death with a reluctant eye.

My honoured father! I oft have heard you say,
That I, in infate state, had a mother who did
Doat on me, and will not death unite me

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

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To her love again ?
 We will await my father's coming,
 Our bliss to consummate ;
 With thine, my Ibzan, thou fairest model of fidelity !
 Eternity will so refine our loves, that they will be
 Angelic and divine !

Ibz. O thou essence of angelic purity !
 Nothing less than heaven is worthy sure of thee.

Enter the PRIESTS.

Jep. Let Jephthah bid farewell to the best
 Of daughters, and of womankind : (*he salutes her.*
 My soul will, with impatience, wait,
 To meet with thine again.

Ibz. Permit thy Ibzan one last embrace,
 O ! thou divinest ! sweetest fair !
 (*Ibz. salutes her.*

Jep. O ye sacred ministers of death,
 Are you now arriv'd ! (*to the priests.*

Elea. I pray thee, Jephthah, my lord, be calm.
 Righteous heaven hath blessings still in store for
 thee ;
 In soft slumbers of the silent night, lo ! I
 A choir of glorious angels saw :
 Their looks were rosy red, diffusive of soft love,
 And fair endearing innocence.
 They play'd upon their glittering golden harps,
 While thus with voice of ravishment they sung :
 Salvation unto Jephthah we proclaim !

By

JEPHTHAH's DAUGHTER.

By the great, the everlasting name,
 Such effeuvium did their breath diffuse,
 As overwhelm'd my senses with delight,
 And in sweet extacy I did awake.
 Therefore I pray thee, O thou belov'd of Heaven!
 Let Jemima, with the virgin choir, assist us
 To perform a sacred song, that for the occasion
 I have composed.

*Enter the Virgins, and twelve Levites, with their
 musical instruments, followed by the Elders; Je-
 mima joins the Virgins, they follow the Priests and
 Levites up to the altar, singing the following ODE.*

AWAKE each softly-breathing lyre!
 From the symbol and psaltery
 Let louder, bolder notes transpire,
 Concordant sounds agree.
 In a sadly pleasing strain
 Let the warbling lute complain;
 The vaulted sky rebound
 The shrill trumpet's sound
 From its starry roof around,
 To praise God in his holiness,
 His great transcendant glory to express!
 Lend, O heavenly host! your aid,
 Our unhallow'd lips pervade;
 With your own warmth our song inspire,
 Ye fair, divine, celestial choir!
 Exult we in the Lord Jehovah's name,
 His great, his everlasting grace proclaim;
 Ye twinkling stars, with sparkling rays,
 And glorious suns, that nimbly run,
 Proclaim ye all Jehovah's praise!

Ye

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

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Ye harbingers of day, that sweetly sung,
 When God this earth self-balanced hung :
 All ye sons of God, that with shouts divine,
 Rent Empyræum's vaulted chrystaline,
 When this fair earth, for man, was made,
 Our song now softly, sweetly aid !
 Ye messengers of great Jehovah's grace !
 Displaying comfort to a fallen race,
 Come animate the soothing sound,
 Let grief in extacy be drown'd.
 Let every soft breathing note appear
 Divinely sweet to Jephthah's ravish'd ear.
 O ! animate his soul with joys divine !
 Patient let him his woes on heaven recline.

Mindful of the vicissitudes that wait
 Upon a mortal fluctuating state,
 On Heaven alone let him cast all his care,
 His joys shall all be realized there ;

Soft dancing pleasures there abound,
 Eternally they circle round.

While possessing, never cloying,
 'These are pleasures worth enjoying,

How transient are the charms
 That frail mortality await,
 In this changing, inconstant state,
 Where fell grief is still annoying
 Mortals with dire alarms.

But with no false deceptious light,
 Eternity shall mock our sight :
 There neither plough we earth nor seas,
 With our wishes every thing agrees,

Fresh springs of joy,
 Without annoy,

G

In

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

In fair succession rise!
 Illustrious rays,
 Glorious blaze!
 Pelucid light
 Charms the sight,
 Pleasing scenes
 Intervenes,
 To charm the ravish'd eyes.
 Choirs of fair blessed angels sing
 Seraphic notes before their king.
 Fell grief and woe are drown'd,
 In the sweet pleasing sound,
 They strike their harps, and joys arise,
 With glorious sparkles, from all eyes!
 Thus, with sweet extacy, they sing
 Unto their great eternal king!
 With lovely fair endearing charms
 Heaven woos Jemima to its arms.
 Hark! loud voices from the skies,
 Bids her spotless soul arise.
 Like the sweet lark in spring
 Does she ascending sing.
 Farewell unto every mortal love,
 In haste Jemima crys,
 For lo! to fair Empyræum's seats above
 I mount the lofty skies.
 Array'd in love and gladness see!
 Angels come, sweet maid, to usher thee!
 As musick soft they move along,
 With harmonious grace,
 Like sweet musick join'd with song,
 Is their celestial pace.
 The abodes divine
 Of chrystaline

Do thee invite !
 The abodes above
 Are paved with love,
 And soft delight.
 Lo ! the ærial gates
 For thee unfolded stand !
 There shining troops of angels waits
 By omnipotent command.
 Thy paths are strew'd with unwithering flowers ;
 Eden reserves its sweets,
 All pleasant odours meets
 In its delicious amaranthine bowers.

The musick ceases, Jemima is led by the High-Priest to the altar, followed by the Virgins ; assisted by them she lies down upon the altar ; the curtains are half drawn.

As the Priests are preparing the sacrificing instruments Ibzan swoons, and is carried off the stage. As the High-priest lifts up the sacrificing knife, an angel descends down within the curtain, and pulls him by the sleeve, uttering the following words :

Hold, Eleazer—hold—thy hand restrain !
 To save the virgin's life from heaven I came.
 As all-glorious upon his radiant throne
 The Majesty of Heaven supremely shone !
 Messiah, incircled with his splendid rays,
 And looks benign, thus to his father says :
 O thou ! ever gracious ! incline thine eyes
 Unto the faithful Jephthah's sacrifice !
 Accept the virgin's parental piety,
 Unhappy Ibzan's bleeding sorrows see !

Mercy's illustrious signal then arose,
 A blaze of emeralds strait the throne inclose ;
 We saw more rosy-red our looks appear'd,
 Shouts of joy throughout the blest abodes were
 heard.

And glad I, at Messiah's summons, came,
 The spotless virgin's life for to proclaim.
 I am one of the ministers of grace
 Unto man's degenerate, fallen race ;
 For to receive omnipotent command,
 I in the beatific presence stand ;
 The prayers of saints, condensed to odours, I
 Offer to Heaven's imperial Majesty !
 My name is Raphael in the blest abodes,
 A messenger of the most holy God's.
 Oft in ethereal flames do I descend ;
 Our substances to all things can extend.
 Upon the wings of Mercy we come down,
 When grace unto returning man is shewn :
 And now am I glad—since this grace to you
 The Lord Omnipotent doth by me shew.

*The Angel ascends ; Jephthah receives his daughter,
 uttering the following acclamation.*

Jep. Oh ! praise we now the Lord Omnipotent !
 For he our horn hath raised from the dust :
 He with his gladness hath our dwellings fill'd,
 And, walking in his light, we will rejoice.
 When we of hope were sadly left forlorn,
 Then nearest was his hand to help our woe.
 O ! never let his worshippers despair !
 For when hope was past, the Lord redeem'd the
 maid,

Je m

Jem. I am all over transport and extasy!
Not that because my life is lengthen'd out,
But that I am announc'd the care of Heaven.
How great—how vast is this deliverance!
My gracious God did send his angel down,
Out of overflowing love to me:
Pleasant is his grace unto my soul!

But where is my Ibzan? he is not dead?
No, gracious Heaven wou'd not so mock my bliss
To send me back to life without his love.
For to save his tears, and thine, my father,
Was all pretence I had to wish for life;
Nothing cou'd have drawn my soul to earth
Again but you;
For Death of all his terrors was disarm'd,
The blest abodes were open to my view;
My longing soul stood ready pruned for night,
And all my hopes were full of blossoms fair.
My soul was clad in the robes of Fortitude,
Firmly I stood, resolv'd to leave the world,
Solicited by prospects more divine;
They open'd on my soul, as I begun
To feel myself diverging from my native element.
But, since it is the pleasure of my God
To send me, for your comfort, back again,
I receive the favour grateful from his hand;
And that life which he so gracious gives,
Will spend in shewing forth his glorious praise.

Jep. How near is God to those that do him
love!

Elea. That God did this deliverance intend,
By that sacred vision he to me foretold!

Nor

Nor was he ever known to look upon
Such piety as your's with cold neglect.
Chaste piety, with humble mien, attends
The throne of grace, she bears to heaven
The prayers of all the just, while adverse winds
Disperse those prayers that flow from lips impure.
When Piety has offer'd up this precious incense
Unto the gracious Majesty of Heaven,
She strait returns with comfort to the penitent,
Diffusing sweet celestial love and fair content.

(Exeunt omnes.)

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

A C T V.

Scene the First; enter Jemima and Ibzan.

Jem. **S**INCE, my Ibzan, thou art now alive,
I am not disappointed of my paradise!

Ibz. And art thou alive, my love, my sole delight!

Art thou substance, or etherial spirit?

No—thou art semblance divine!

And Ibzan's soul hath overtaken thee in its flight.

Our happiness will not be transient now!

No, 'twill be everlasting as our love.

Jem. Indulgent heaven, I trust, will make it so,
When our mortal race is run, but we are yet
Within the verge of frail mortality.

Ibz. How didst thou escape, my lovely fair?
For when my swooning eyes forsook the light,
The horrid instrument was raised to take away
Thy precious life.

Jem. It was indeed, but, wonderful to tell!
The everlasting God, 'midst mercy sent
An angel down to snatch the knife.

Ibz. The Lord is wonderful in all his ways,
And his mercies does transcend his power.

Enter

Enter JEPHTHAH ; IBZAN kneels down before him.

Ibz. Most noble Jephthah ! since, by miracle,
The benevolent Creator hath unto life
Restored again the pious maid,
O imitate his gracious clemency !
And my fidelity approve ;
O do thou regard my sufferings past !
Let present joys fill up their place.

(Jephthah raises him up.)

Jep. Yes, my Ibzan, it wou'd be cruelty
To let thy soul, like Gideon's fleece, be dry,
When our gracious God diffuses joy on all.
Since such salvation hath been wrought to-day,
It with our daughter's nuptials shall be crown'd.
Unto thy attent love we give the maid,
For she to thy fidelity is due.
The fiery trial all thy dross has purg'd,
And made thee worthy of her tenderest love.
The Priests and Levites come to offer
Up a sacrifice of praise ; and, my Ibzan,
When that is done, then shall your
Fair hymeneal rites begin.

Ibz. How shall I express my gratitude ?
Thou more than father ! more than friend !

Jep. Gratitude is only due to our gracious God,
Who hath restored to life the maid
For to reward thy faithful virtuous love.
Art thou willing, my Jemima, to espouse
This faithful generous man ?

Jem.

Jem. For to disown the feelings of my heart,
Wou'd, my honour'd father! render me most
base,

Our hearts have long been unisons,
And by the laws of sympathy are tied;
His love most precious was amidst my joys,
And costly was his tears unto my soul;
Nothing save heaven cou'd supplant him in my
heart:

I did paint the bright celestial inhabitants of heaven like him—

But, lo! I found the idea inadequate,
When the celestial visitant descended down,
An emanation flowing from beauty's source:
The heavenly radius all his features overspread,
His face like to our divine law-giver
Upon Sinai's glorious mount appear'd,
It was brightness and splendor ineffable.
Like unto him will all the righteous shine,
When radiated by those celestial beams
Which everlastingly do flow,
From the source of beauty and of grace,

Enter the Priests, Levites, and Virgins, singing and playing the following ODE.

Elea. In choral hymns, harmonious lays,
Ye Levites, strike the sounding lyre!
Unto the great Jehovah's praise
With gladsome voice aspire.
Like incense shall the sound ascend,
Where shining troops of angels tend
The bright immortal throne of grace;
Incircled with the rays,

H

The

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

The splendor of Jehovah's face !
 With ravishment eternally they gaze !
 Eternal sing his unexhausted praise.
 Sweet Mercy, more than sacrifice,
 Delights the Father of all grace and love :
 From Mercy sweetest incense rise
 Unto the blest celestial realms above.
 From love each being it derives its birth,
 From love Omnipotence created heaven and
 earth.

From love divine our gracious God
 Did all his creatures animate ;
 Descending from his bright abode
 A world for to create :
 A happy world, while man retain'd
 His fair primævous innocence,
 The image of his God maintain'd,
 Nor knew to give offence.
 Unlike that God whom Ammon's sons adore,
 All o'er besmear'd with mournful parent's tears,
 And piteous struggling infant's streaming gore,
 Our great, our universal God appears.
 Unlike grim Moloch : horrid ! direful King !
 Appears the Author of all Grace !
 Unto Moloch with noisy drums they sing,
 While they their piteous offspring place
 On his dread altar, cruel sacrifice !
 Regardless of their shrieks, and direful cries.

Array'd in mercy, great Jehovah he
 Look'd down, O Jephthah ! man belov'd ! on
 thee !
 Reversing of thy virtuous daughters fate,
 He all thy tearful woes did abrogate.

With

With fair mercy cheer'd thy woeful face,
Sending an angel to proclaim his grace.
Loft in the splendor of each heavenly ray,
The dolours of our grief are fled away;
The Son of Righteousness auspicious rose,
With healing on his wings, to soothe our woes.

Then sweetly to the sounding lyre,
With nimble steps, in mazy dance,
Ye bright, ye beauteous virgin quire,
Come softly now advance :
With grateful hearts express your joy,
With thankfulness your smiling hours employ ;
Your sorrows now are done away,
Bright halcyon days ensue,
O ! celebrate, ye fair, this happy day !
As does the circling year its youth renew.
Not with sad lamentable voice of woe,
Let zephyrs your loose tresses blow,
But in seraphic hymns express your song,
With lofty sounding, fair exalted strains,
To gladness does superior strains belong,
Gladness superior ardour claims,
Unto divine Omnipotence address your song.

With purity of mind express
The ardour of your souls divine,
Nor can your gratitude be less,
While pleasures round ye shine.
In bright heaven's fair angelic moulds
Omnipotence has form'd your souls,
Immortal happiness to prove :
O ! do ye not deface
The work of great omniscient power and love.
Jemima hath restored the female race,

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

From the attainder of their parent Eve
 She does her sex retrieve.
 Her shining path ye fair pursue,
 For she to heaven's high will her fate resign'd;
 Like her, O! bear ye still a heaven in view!
 Like her's, O! be your purity of mind,
 And unexhausted peace you shall eternal find.
 The incense of our lips, in choral lays,
 Let us now offer up a sacrifice:
 For heavenly mercy far transcends all praise,
 That can from mortal beings rise.
 Lend, lend your voice, you glowing seraphims!
 To praise our great unutterable God!
 With yours, ye bright celestial cherubims!
 That hymn around the blest abode:
 O! join ye all with us in choral lays,
 To offer up a sacrifice of grateful praise.

*(The musick ceases; Jephthah gives his
 daughter's hand to Ibzan.)*

Jep. Take, O Ibzan! this maid to be thy wife,
 And may the Lord, the everlasting God!
 Give you joy for this your grief;
 Felicity your sorrows recompence:
 Your prospects now are flourishing and fair,
 The very seasons do around you smile,
 All things with the face of Paradise is crown'd;
 Peace, with her halcyon next, will build near you;
 She, fair, mild and gall-less dove,
 Shall with her olives you encompass round;
 Hope, with blossoms of the opening spring
 Does you present;
 Every soft delight does on you wait,
 Like a fair morning, calm, serene,
 After a tedious, dismal, stormy night.

Ibz.

Ibz. All things, indeed, my honour'd lord!
 Do wear the smiles of Paradise:
 Kind Heaven has revers'd my fate,
 And given to my wishes all their wish.
 Blessed be this fair auspicious day!
 While life remains, by me it shall be honour'd:
 For full and flourishing are all my hopes of happiness.
 And now, O reverend Eleazer, haste to tie the
 knot,
 Which Death's strong hand shall not long dissolve;
 For in such nice proportion hath heaven form'd
 our souls,
 That neither can exist without the other.

*(The High-Priest joins their hands,
 uttering the following words:*

Elea. O great Jehovah! look down upon
 This virtuous pair;
 Regard their fidelity, and crown their lives
 With eternal happiness.

*(He chaunts the following ODE, which the
 Levites and Virgins sing and play:*

Come, ye beauteous virgin choir!
 Whom celestial love inspire,
 O come! your grateful tribute bring,
 With voice of joy and gladness sing.
 O come, ye Levites! and rejoice;
 Let the heavens above redound
 The shrill sweetness of your voice;
 Love and gladness claim your song,
 To these sublimest notes belong.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

Jehovah hath from death redeem'd the fair,

Because she did herself approve

Worthy of omniscient love.

Blest ministers of everlasting grace above

Themselves did gladly int'rest in her care.

To reward her merit rare

An angel descended down,

With love and gladness future life to crown.

Let the virgin then rejoice

In the illustrious object of her choice.

For the past sufferings of this noble pair

Gloriously rewarded are ;

They the fiery trial did undergo,

The furnace has no more to do ;

Their little dross is purg'd away,

This glorious, thrice blessed day.

Whom shou'd the brave heroic youth approve ?

What fair is worthy of his arduous love ?

His genuine virtues, transcendant clear !

Did in adversity appear.

Through its furnace Jemima past :

By adversity were they both refined at last.

While the sweet fair in embryo was,

Kind nature form'd the lovely mass

Of beauty elegant refined !

Fit to receive a virtuous mind.

The rest was great Jehovah's care,

He form'd her soul divinely fair.

Fortitude, and filial piety,

Illustrious, celestial, and divine !

All other virtues does combine,

O ! Jephthah's daughter fair in thee !

Happy,

Happy, happy pair ! none but Ibzan he,
O fair ! deserves thy love,
None but thee can he approve,
Jehovah ! ever blest above !
To this faithful illustrious pair,
Continue these thy blessings rare,
With peace and joy their dwelling fill,
Let gladness on their hearts distill,
Like morning dew on Hermon's hill. }
Wife in peace, and bold in war,
Let his renown be spread afar !
Innumerable as the stars that shine,
Be their fair illustrious line !
Fair Plenty's gifts may they possess ;
With rich abundance do them bless.

(*Exeunt omnes.*)

F I N I S.

Happy happy said I none but I have been
O fair! deceiver thy love
None but thou canst approve
Jehovah! everlastingly above!
To this faithful virgin's pair
Continue these thy blessings rare
With peace and joy their dwelling fill
Let gladness on their hearts distill
Like morning dew on Lebanon's hill
With in peace, and hold in war
Let his renown be spread afar!
Innumerable as the stars that shine
Be their fair illustrious line!
Fair Plenty's gifts may they possess
With rich abundance do their bliss

(Excerpt from) 4 AP 54

F I W I S

